R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 011 016 UD 001 373

PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPING A REALISTIC EMPLOYMENT COUNSELING PROGRAM FOR DISADVANTAGED URBAN YOUTH.

BY- JONES, ROY J. TERRELL, DAVID L

PUB DATE 64

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.09 HC-$2.08 52P.

DESCRIPTORS- *COUNSELING CENTERS, *EMPLOYMENT, *DISADVANTAGED YOUTH, *DELINQUENTS, EMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS, COUNSELING TECHNIQUES, DROPOUTS, EMPLOYER ATTITUDES, COUNSELORS

A YOUTH EMPLOYMENT COUNSELING CENTER WAS ESTABLISHED TO PROVIDE A TENTATIVE WORKING MODEL FOR THE SETTING UP OF NEW YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS. MANY OF THE SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED YOUTHS (AGES 16 TO 18) SERVED BY THE CENTER HAD POLICE RECORDS. THE CENTER'S COUNSELING STAFF WAS RECRUITED FROM MANY DISCIPLINES AND DEALT ONLY WITH THE PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE YOUTHS' EMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS AND WITH THEIR DEVELOPING A REALISTIC AND MEANINGFUL OUTLOOK ABOUT THEIR FUTURE. COUNSELING AND EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT PROBLEMS AROSE FROM THE YOUTHS' INADEQUATE MEANS OF EXPRESSION, LACK OF KNOW-HOW IN TAKING WRITTEN TESTS, ACADEMIC HANDICAPS, AND SELF-DEFEATING ATTITUDES. THE YOUTHS' POLICE RECORDS AND LABOR LAWS PROHIBITING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT FURTHER CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROBLEMS OF FINDING JOBS FOR THEM. (BD)

ED011016

Good
ERIC

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPING A REALISTIC EMPLOYMENT COUNSELING PROGRAM FOR DISADVANTAGED URBAN YOUTH

Submitted by:

Roy J. Jones, Ph.D.

and

David L. Terrell

UD 001373

50 p.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

I. INTRODUCTION

If the youth employment programs currently being developed and implemented under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 are to be effective as more than a placebo which at best alleviates symptoms, they must address themselves more intently to the etiology of the youth employment problem. These programs must also address themselves to realistically raising the employment potential of the target population through practical programs of vocational training, counseling and job placement.

The youth employment problem cannot be solved simply by uprooting and herding large numbers of urban and rural youth off to camps and teaching them forestry and landscaping. Nor is the long-range solution to the problem to be found in programs which are aimed primarily at providing jobs so that youth may complete their high school education.

Solution to the problem requires far more long-range planning than has been evident to date. Solution to the problem will require reorientation and redefinition of goals of agencies and institutions which are charged with responsibilities in public education, employment, and public welfare.

For example, vocational training programs either within the educational system or those mounted through community action programs must perforce, be oriented toward those jobs that will not be automated out of existence for a minimum of five years. Vocational training must be commensurate with the projected labor market demands. Job placement, except as when it is consciously used as a job conditioning process or as emergency financial assistance, must also be made on those jobs that have a

life span of at least five years. These job placements must provide for these youth, who are often heads of households, an opportunity for at least horizontal if not, upward mobility during this time period.

Long-range solution to this social problem will require the use of realistic vocational counseling as a major component of programs aimed at both the in-school and the out-of-school "hard-core" youth population.

The placing of in-school youth on jobs without consideration being given to long-range vocational goals or the placing of the out-of-work, out-of-school youth in jobs or in training programs without consideration being given to their employment or training readiness or the holding power of a specific job placement, at best provides a stop-gap solution to the problem.

The need for and the effectiveness of counseling for this segment of the population has been dramatically demonstrated through programs of vocational rehabilitation, Department of Labor Demonstration Projects, the Roving Leader or Detached Worker Programs, etc.

In a recent statement before the House Select Sub Committee on Labor Brayfield[1] reviewed the vocational counseling program of the Minneapolis Division of Public Relief. He stated, "vocational counseling helped individuals to identify their marketable assets, greatly improved their motivation and increased their self-confidence."

There is general agreement as to the positive effect of counseling irrespective of the target population or the type of counseling offered, i.e., vocational, clinical, educational, etc. There is also general

agreement that the effectiveness of counseling can be increased. This is particularly true of those counseling programs which are aimed specifically at the "hard-core," disadvantaged youth who comprise the major portion of the inner city youth population.

Many of these youth, including those who have completed high school are not equipped with the skills which are currently in demand. In addition many of these youth, as indicated earlier, are not at adequate training or employment readiness levels. Many of them lack the minimal work skills needed to perform on a job. Such primary factors as punctuality, grooming, proper work dress, relating to supervisors and peers, respect for personal and property rights of others and ability to perform sustained work are lacking, in varying degrees, among these youth.

The transmitting of these primary factors must therefore be embodied in any serious attempt at working with these youth.

II. A PRECEDENT

The programs that have been established and conducted under the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime Act of 1961 and the Manpower and Development Training Act of 1962 provide a tentative working model and an armamentarium of experience for the setting up of new youth employment programs.

Recently the authors of this article were involved in such a Youth Employment Program. A contract was entered into by Washington Action for Youth (WAY) and the Office of Manpower, Automation and Training (OMAT), Department of Labor. Washington Action for Youth was awarded a grant by

the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime for the purpose of developing a comprehensive program to combat juvenile delinquency in the District of Columbia. The OMAT contract provided for the establishment of a "Youth Employment Counseling Center" as part of this comprehensive program. The Youth Employment Counseling Center was physically located in an area selected as the target area, i.e., the Cardozo School District, for this comprehensive program. The major tasks under the terms of the OMAT contract, was the instituting of experimental, selection, intake, counseling, placement and follow-up techniques designed to involve alienated, hard-to-reach youth in training programs and to improve their adjustment to permanent employment. The pages which follow are descriptive of some of the problems encountered in establishing such a youth employment program.

A. The Staff

In the process of recruiting staff for this project a special effort was made to include persons with a master's degree or equivalent experience from different disciplines. The staff selected included persons with backgrounds in educational counseling, social work, vocational counseling, general and clinical psychology.

The rationale for this selection was to provide a situation that would foster interdisciplinary feedback and cross-fertilization. The specific purpose was to avoid a purely clinical, vocational, educational or social work counseling approach. It was anticipated that an efficient working model would evolve from this approach.

B. The Counseling Format

Following the recruitment of staff a two-week orientation program was conducted. During orientation it was constantly re-emphasized that the counseling of these youth was to be "reality oriented." Reality oriented counseling was interpreted as a limiting of counseling content to problems and solution to problems that were directly related to gaining meaningful employment. By definition, therefore, the psycho-dynamics of human behavior, oedipal conflicts, counter-transference, etc., were to be excluded from the counselors reality focused approach. The counselor was cautioned against becoming involved in any problem the youth might have unless it was directly related to factors impeding the youth's becoming gainfully employed.

The essential steps in the counseling process included the development of a relationship between a particular counselor and a particular hard-core youth that began at the point of initial contact and extended through job placement and follow-up. The one-to-one relationship between the counselor and the counselee was intended to provide a continuity of service for the youth--his particular case did not need constant review each time he visited the center. This procedure facilitated the formulating of an "action plan" for the youth. (By action plan is meant the development of an agreement between the counselor and the youth and involved the delineation of vocational objectives.) In addition, the one-to-one relationship between counselor and counselee provided for many of these youth the first such experience in their lifetime. They were,

for the first time, involved in an objective but warm relationship that had a primary focus on what, as expressed by them, represented real problems.

In formulating an action plan with the counselee, the counselor helped the youth to define not only his limitations but his potential. Many of these youth, it was found, have extremely limited perceptions of themselves and the world-of-work. For example, a youth who scores high in manual dexterity and mechanical aptitude may see himself as becoming a tire-changer in a gasoline station. The thought of becoming a skilled mechanic or an auto painter and body man is often found to be beyond his level of aspiration. Most of these hard-core youth thought in terms of immediate employment, usually in some low skill dead-end job with no apparent perception of or motivation for long-term career employment or upward mobility. The attitudes of these youth were often self-defeating and had paralyzing effects, with respect to the setting up of long-range vocational goals.

Included in the development of a reality counseling approach was an attempt to help the youth begin to develop a meaningful and realistic long-range plan for his life, to plan where he would like to be five, ten, fifteen and thirty years from today. He was encouraged to examine the steps he would have to take to accomplish these long-range goals.

The counselor in working with the type of youth with the limited perception described above formulated an action plan that would place the youth in a tire-changer job as part of a prevocational experience. He

would then begin to explore with the youth, in subsequent counseling sessions, the need for training to become an automobile mechanic or an auto painter and body man.

The frequency of contact between the youth and his counselor was tailored to the appraised needs of the youth. In general, the frequency of contact was greater during the initial sessions and became less frequent after the youth had been placed on a job or in training. In almost every instance where the counselee was placed on a job and began to encounter difficulty with supervisory personnel or was terminated the frequency and intensity of the counseling sessions was increased. The youth was terminated from counseling when in the judgement of the counselor the youth had reached a point of "maximum benefit" from the counseling experience.

C. Characteristics of the Population Served

The contractual agreement between OMAT and WAY was that these efforts would be directed toward the "hard core," "alienated," "hard-to-reach," "disadvantaged youth." These youth present problems which seemingly defy solution and any counselor looking for immediate payoff with these youth is in for a rude awakening. There is a large number of not so hard-core youth in the urban areas in need of the services offered in a program of this type. It is very rewarding to the counselor to be able to achieve almost immediate payoff in working with these less difficult cases. The more hard-core youth, however, presents the counselor with the greater challenge. These cases take up much more counselor time and move much

slower but, the gains in terms of positive reinforcement for the coun-- selor and in terms of the ultimate costs to society have not yet been accurately assayed.

In order to insure that the program would deal with the truly hard-core segment of the population a priority system based on an operational definition of "hard-core" was adopted. A hard-core youth was defined as:

1. Between the ages of 16-22 years of age
2. A school dropout with poor literacy skills
3. Possessing no marketable skills or at best limited marketable skills
4. Has not been previously gainfully employed for any appreciable length of time
5. Usually has a police record
6. Relatively poor social skills and inadequate means of expression
7. Resident of the target area

The youth with these characteristics were assigned scores and those who had the lowest score were given the highest priority for service. This system of classification provided the framework for excluding those youth not as much in need of service. Such a system, obviously, does not provide for any glowing success story in terms of number served. Unfortunately it is felt in many quarters that the federally-sponsored programs must provide large numbers in order to pass subsequent legislation. It can be forcefully argued, however, that these programs obscure their raison d'etre when they focus on numbers per se for such a requirement necessarily moves the focus from the population that these programs were designed, by legislative intent, to serve.

D. Intake

From September 1963 to August 1964 a total of 1,731 youth had contact with the Youth Employment Counseling Center. The age and sex distribution for these youth is presented in the table below:

TABLE I: Age and Sex Distribution of Youth in Contact with the WAY Youth Employment Counseling Center

Age	Sex					
	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
15 and below	40	3	10	2	50	02
16 - 18	722	60	346	65	1068	62
19 - 21	388	33	157	30	545	31
22 and over	49	4	19	3	68	4
	1199	100	532	100	1731	99

It can be seen in the above table that of the total 1,731 youth who had contact with the Center during this one-year period, the vast majority were in the age group 16-18 for both the males and the females. The age distribution was essentially the same for both sexes, however, the ratio between the sexes is two-to-one in favor of the male youth.

It should be pointed out that while all of these youth were in contact at least once with the Center not all of them met the operational eligibility criteria established by the Center for hard-core youth. What is important about the total number of youth is that for the most part they all perceived the Center as offering a type of service that would be of value to them.

TABLE II: Status of Total Intake at the End of One Year

Status	Number	Percent
Active Caseload	265	15
Completed Action Plan*	608	35
No Further Action Possible	257	15
Low Priority	601	35

*Sixty-four of the cases reported here were reactivated during the course of the year.

It can be seen in Table II above that 608 or 35 percent of the youth in contact with the program were able to participate in an action plan to completion. It is of interest that of the 608 youth in this category, 49 percent or 297 were placed in employment; 58 or 10 percent were encouraged to return to school. Of the remaining 41 percent many developed skill in locating employment for themselves, some were referred to other community agencies, such as the United States Employment Service of D.C., Vocational Rehabilitation, the Howard University Center for Youth and Community Studies, etc., others were enrolled in on-the-job training programs.

The 257 youth in the category "no further action possible," included those who had moved from the city, those who had been institutionalized, those who could not be located within the city, and those who had refused further service.

In July 1964 a sub-contract was entered into between Washington Action for Youth and the Office of Manpower, Automation and Training,

Department of Labor for the development of a pre-vocational training program for these hard-core youth. The purpose of this program was to provide a situation whereby these youth could be brought up to an employment or training readiness level. The pre-vocational training program combined remediation with the teaching of basic work skills in a supervised work situation. The youth in this program received the regular MDTA training allowance.

Forty of the youth in the category "Active caseload," (See Table II) were enrolled in this program.

III. OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS

There are many factors which act as impediments to the effective implementation of a youth employment counseling program. Some of these impediments are to be found in the implementation of any new program where no prototype exists. There are also barriers to be found in the general public attitude toward adolescents in general and hard-core adolescents in particular. This is especially true when the majority of the youth are male Negro, as is the case with most of the large urban youth programs. The characteristics of the hard-core youth population often act as a deterring factor for the potential public and private employer.

There are also operational problems that can often be traced directly to the bureaucratic structure of the established agencies and institutions in the community. Obviously these operational problems are ultimately reflected in the quality and quantity of service offered. Included

in the pages which follow are some of the internal and external problems associated with the operation of the Youth Employment Counseling Center program.

A. Internal Problems

Problems Associated with the Youth

Many of these youth, as with other adolescents, are typically concerned with establishing personal identity. They are constantly testing the limits and asking for structure.

This is also a period of rebellion against those who would impose controls and define limits. Many of these youth experienced considerable difficulty in relating to persons in positions of authority or who represent authority. Behavioral responses often included a type of passive resistance which expressed itself in the missing of appointments for interviews, tardiness, "forgetting" to accomplish a minor but important task, withholding a bit of vital information, absenteeism, and a pseudo-retarded manner of thinking and acting.

On the other hand, volatile and rapidly changing emotional states, which are found during the adolescent period frequently resulted in these youth making snap and unsound judgements which often acted as barriers to their reaching more sensible long-range life goals.

In some instances the fear of commitment on the part of these youth tended to retard and in some cases prevent, the adequate and progressive development of sound action plans.

The role of the counselor became one of attempting to correct and overcome these response patterns through group and individual counseling and by demonstrating the value of follow-through to the individual counselee.

Many of the youth felt that continued study and additional training and preparation would not guarantee opportunities to enjoy life better. Many of the Negro youth felt that they had to possess above-average ability, if they were to secure decent jobs after the completion of training. Some of the youth had difficulty perceiving and accepting the fact that favorable employment could become a reality.

One of the continued counseling tasks was to attempt to correct such attitudes by taking the initiative in exploring these attitudes with the youth, trying to communicate with and convince them that better job possibilities are becoming available as racial barriers disappear. This was a difficult task for the counselor because the counselor often also had concrete evidence to the contrary.

An experience is recalled in which some well-screened youth who had been hired on a temporary basis at a large chain department store were rejected by an employer without an adequate explanation to the youth. These youth had been placed in clerical and sales positions, better than the traditional ones of custodian or laborer, for this department store. The employer later admitted to one of the white staff members that community pressure had forced him to discharge the youth. Few Negroes lived in the area where this store was located.

This type of reaction by the community and action by employers or prospective employers produced immeasurable negative and damaging effects upon the morale and enthusiasm of both the youth and the counselor. Such actions obviously have a deleterious effect upon the youth's ability to plan in terms of meaningful vocational goals.

The job development staff and the counselors attempted to prevent the youth from being exposed to such incidents. In those instances where they were exposed, the counselors candidly discussed the issue and pointed out to the youth that these conditions are in the process of being corrected.

Family and Antecedent Conditions

These youth and their families are telling examples of the resultant effects that are produced by the historical interaction of economic and cultural deprivation. In the past it has been nearly impossible for the great-grandparents, grandparents, and parents of these youth to plan their lives with optimism. It takes a very exceptional stable poor family to provide their children with intellectual stimulation, cultural enrichment and higher education on an average annual income of $3,500.

It appears that enhancing the economic base of this segment of the population, as well as intensive psychological and educational remediation, is necessary if these youth are to overcome their underexposure, deprivation, inhibitions, fears and apparent lack of motivation which has resulted from these conditions.

The work of Deutsch[2] and the Howard University Center for Youth and Community Studies is providing documentation of what occurs when efforts are made in this direction. In both instances, and working with different age levels, three to six in the case of Deutsch and sixteen to twenty-two in the case of the Howard University Center for Youth and Community Studies, dramatic and profound changes have occurred in these youth when sincere efforts are made at correcting these deficiencies through the increasing of self-perception and the enhancing of self-esteem.

The Youth's Inadequate Means of Expression

In general the youth in this segment of the population are almost completely lacking in verbal facility, particularly in structured and formal situations. The inability to articulate and the concommitant fear of self-expression under these conditions serve as an additional barrier for these youth.

These youth, who can be quite free in self-expression in a relaxed informal situation particularly one involving their peers, quite often are constricted in the formal structured situation when an adult is present. This fear usually results in their being unable to "sell" themselves to others who are not particularly aware of or necessarily sympathetic toward, these youth. Again, it appears that massive environmental stimulation beginning at an early age and aimed specifically at increasing skills in articulation is a necessary precondition.

Educational Attainment

Most of the youth who ~~are~~ were counseled during the existing existence of this project had not completed more than nine years of formal education before either dropping out or being put out of school. It is general knowledge

that the number of years spent in school does not in any way indicate the highest level of academic achievement attained by these youth. These youth had often failed grades and were given social promotions to higher grades because of their ages or because they presented behavioral problems. Obviously poor literacy skills as well as much of their inability to articulate is directly related to the lack of a sound educational background and impoverished home conditions. Formal testing indicated that the reading ability of the majority of these youth was at the 4.5 grade level, in some instances five grades below that of the last grade completed.

While general educational achievement and the related verbal ability were low for these youth, it did not necessarily follow, as is often assumed, that they possessed highly developed, overcompensated or superior non-verbal abilities, mechanical aptitude, or manual dexterity.

In November 1963, Washington Action for Youth entered into a subcontract with the Institute for Educational Research for the Development of programmed learning materials for this population. The results obtained on the youth who completed forty hours of remedial reading in this program were promising but not definitive because of the small number of youth that could be counseled to remain in the remediation program. One of the major difficulties in keeping youth in this program was related to financial circumstances. Many simply could not afford to participate in a daytime program without compensation, and were difficult to motivate for participation in an evening program.

MDTA legislation was subsequently amended so that institutional programs conducted by the United States Employment Service and the Vocational Education Program could add remediation to these training programs.

The Matter of Bonding, Police Records and Security Clearances

A large number of the male youth involved in this program had a history of police contact. Offenses ranged from truancy and beyond parental control, to unauthorized use of an automobile and grand larcency. Some had been committed to training schools and some had served sentences in youth correctional institutions. Many prospective employers flatly refused to consider these youth for employment, even in cases where there were indications of successful rehabilitation. It was usually necessary to obtain clearance of these youth from the police department before preparing or counseling them for a job. It was often true that youth were granted a chance to work only after their counselors or members of the job development staff had made special pleas in their behalf, promising to assume full responsibility for correcting mistakes which the youth would possibly make.

The problems which arise when a youth is said to have a police record could sometimes be eliminated with a more detailed report of the nature of the offense and disposition of the case.

A case in point, is one of a youth of dull normal intelligence who sold eggs on a regular basis in different neighborhoods. On one day he innocently asked one of his customers, a single, white, female in her sixties, if he could use her bathroom. She immediately became terrified, slammed the door and called the police. The youth left the scene without realizing that the woman was upset and frightened. When he returned the next week to make his regular delivery, policeman, who had been waiting

in the woman's apa: tment, rushed out, seized the youth and charged him with indecent expo ure. The youth was subsequently given psychiatric and psychological exam nations which revealed his defective ability as well as a very severe hearing defect. A more thorough questioning of the woman involved also shed new light upon the case. The youth was found innocent of the charges and released. In spite of the outcome of the case the youth still has a record of having been arrested and this record of arrest in addition to his defective intelligence severely restricts, if not eliminates, at the age of 19, his chances to secure employment in many areas. One can speculate on where this particular youth goes from here, especially without the external support needed to help him negotiate the system.

It should be underscored that the problems of bonding, police records, and security clearances was not only a problem with the private employer but with the federal and local government as well. As indicated earlier, the federal and local governments employ slightly better than fifty percent of the Washington labor force and there is a continuing need for personnel at almost every skill level. A significant breakthrough for this project would have involved the relaxing of regulations against the employment of youth in general and youth with records in particular.

It is recognized that there are some very real obstacles to employment of these youth by the government which do not lend themselves to immediate solution. Among these is the need ~~of~~ for a security clearance for employment in many agencies regardless of the skill level involved. Due

to the high rate of contact with the courts by the youth being serviced many otherwise qualified youth were not eligible for consideration. This question obviously still deserves detailed study by all interested parties to see what steps can be taken to open as many training and employment opportunities as possible for this segment of the population.

Age, Sex and Child Labor Laws

As indicated in an earlier section, the majority of the youth having contact with the Center were between the ages of 16-18. This factor alone restricted the speed with which the counselors were able to satisfactorily complete an action plan. This is particularly true of the unmarried mother below the age of eighteen. The retail industry in the District of Columbia provides a rich possibility for job placement for the female youth in this population. The Child Labor Law of the District of Columbia, written in 1929, prohibits the employment of any girl below the age of 18 after 7:00 p.m.. The larger department stores would therefore have to make special concessions for this group of employees if they are to remain open until 9:00 p.m. on special week days and during the holiday season, etc.

Most of the female youth with whom we had contact had dropped out of school because of pregnancy. They usually came to the Center with a myraid of problems which were associated with their pregnancy. These problems included feelings of guilt, feelings of rejection by family and community, anxiety about facing the tremendous responsibility of rearing a child alone without the help of the father, who, if found, limited his

responsibility to that of providing minimal assistance for the child's maintenance. These young mothers, of necessity, have to develop a schemata for negotiating with community welfare agencies in an effort to secure funds for maintenance of their children and themselves.

The behavior of these young mothers was indicative of their [redacted] emotional insecurity. While one of these mothers may react to the situation with tremendous feelings of despair and hopelessness, another may neglect the child and deny the existence of the problems. Very real problems of not having enough money to provide the essentials for the child and herself was a common one for these young mothers. In some cases job opportunities did not prove very helpful. In one case, after exhaustive efforts, a counselor located a prospective job for one of these youth, only to discover later that the job paid exactly the same amount of money that the mother would have to pay a baby sitter to keep her child during the week.

The cases presented below are typical of the seemingly insoluble problems presented by sixteen year old female and male youth.

CASE I

Identification Data

Jane Doe is a sixteen year old single female who dropped out of school while in the tenth grade. She is the mother of two children and lived with a foster mother under the supervision of child welfare. She is the oldest of four children, all separated and in different homes.

Initial Contact with WAY-YECC

The youth came to the Center for the first time in October 1963, in search of a job as a typist or salesgirl. Although she had taken courses in typing, her actual ability was practically nil and her aspirations to find immediate employment as a typist or salesgirl were unrealistic--the typing job because of her limited skills, the sales job because of her age.

Legal History

This youth was a ward of the District Training School from July 1961 to September 1962, she was committed because of a lack of parental care.

School History

As far as can be determined, the youth made an adequate adjustment in public school up until the time when she became pregnant at the age of 15 years. There was no history of failure of a grade level and her general ability and achievement was within the average range.

Previous Work Experience

This youth's only work experience was limited to one week as a nurse's aide. She had gained that job through Washington Action for Youth's Summer Job Program, but was not able to maintain it because of her pregnancy.

Counseling at WAY

The counselor first pointed out to the youth her unrealistically high aspirations for immediate placement in a position for which she was not adequately trained. She was then assisted in the exploration of MDTA Training Programs.

She was quite enthusiastic about taking an MDTA typing course, but was too young to receive allowances. She could not afford a forty week course without the allowance and there was a very limited expectation of employment, due to her age, if she had completed the program.

The food service program was considered and she seemed willing to take a chance on a four-week program that would give her some minimal skills, even if her age might limit possibilities of employment. The youth did not report for registration for the program, however, and later informed the counselor that she could not commit herself to four weeks of training without compensation, as long as there was a possibility that she could find some employment during that four-week period.

The youth then decided on domestic day-work until she became older and could enter a training program and receive an allowance. She did not want the domestic work nor had she had experience in it. She was willing to try it because of her desperate need for employment.

The counselor felt that this youth was mature beyond her age and capable of learning a skill that would lead to permanent employment.

The legal structure regarding work for minors and the lack of training programs which provided allowances for sixteen year olds, however, presented a formidable set of barriers.

For some time counseling efforts were concentrated on getting her interested in the kinds of jobs for which she could qualify, such as, baby sitter or domestic. At the same time efforts were directed toward preventing her from becoming hopelessly frustrated and discouraged, and maintaining contact with her until such time as she could be placed.

After some months of counseling and part-time work the youth was fortunate enough to be accepted in a community apprentice program being conducted at the Howard University Center for Youth and Community Studies. She and other youth her age were trained to become recreation aides, case work aides, and research aides. The youth is currently employed in an area related to her training and has recently enrolled in night school.

The position provided her with some desperately needed financial support and with skills and social contacts which will prove useful in ~~obtaining~~ realistic vocational goals.

CASE II

Identification Data

John Doe is a physically small and underdeveloped youngster who appeared much younger than his stated age. He is an illegitimate child who lived with his mother and step-father for fifteen years. The youth's probation officer informed the counselor that the youth had been deprived of emotional satisfaction since early childhood. In addition to not being accepted by the step-father, the mother is said to have shown little or no interest in his general welfare.

Initial Contact with WAY-YECC

John was referred to the WAY-Youth Employment Counseling Center (YECC) by the Juvenile Court on October 2, 1963. His probation officer had informed him that the Center was concerned with finding employment for and/or exposing youths to training.

School History

The youth dropped out of school on the very day that he reached sixteen years of age, while in the ninth grade. Prior to that time he had failed subjects, shown poor achievement, had difficulty relating to peers and teachers and had a history of truancy.

Legal History

In 1959, John was committed to the Department of Public Welfare after having been declared by the court to be beyond the control of his parents. He was committed to the District Training School for 18 months and remained there for the entire period. Approximately eight months after his release from the District Training School he began to truant from school again and was re-activated with the juvenile court.

Previous Work Experience

The youth had no employment history.

Counseling at WAY

The counselor discussed with John how the fact that his commitment to an institution, the absence of job skills, and low educational level very much limited his employment opportunities. He was helped to realize that training would be more beneficial to him and he expressed an interest in the MDTA Institutional Program for Automobile Service Station Attendants. He was appraised as possessing the minimal abilities which were needed in order to enter that program. Arrangements were made to enroll in the program, but a problem was encountered in placing the youth

because of his age. The counselor was able to get the youth placed in the program with the understanding that it would be the sole responsibility of the YECC to provide the youth with placement in employment after he had completed training.

While in training John was closely followed by his counselor and observed by his MDTA supervisor who provided the counselor with weekly progress reports on John. John made an excellent adjustment to the training, and his age and small stature apparently did not interfere with his overall performance.

Upon completion of his training, the counselor experienced the anticipated difficulty in placing the youth in a job because of problems related to his size and that section of the child labor law which is related to working with hydraulic equipment. The counselor was finally able to locate a job as a service station attendant in suburban D.C. after the prospective employer waived requirements of at least 5' 6" in height and no court record. The position paid $1.27 an hour.

During the period in which John was in training, the counselor worked in conjunction with the juvenile court and the youth was brought into court for disposition on the truancy complaint. The counselor submitted a progress report to the juvenile court which described the youth's adjustment while in counseling. Included in a subsequent report and after John had been placed on a job, a request was made by the counselor and the probation officer to the effect that the counselee be placed on probation. This request was granted by the court.

Subsequent follow-up indicated that John's employer was satisfied with his performance on the job and the case was phased out.

While the two preceding cases have relatively successful outcomes, there were many of these youth whose satisfactory movement toward employment was impeded because of their age, sex, and/or existing child labor laws in the District of Columbia.

The Matter of Testing

Throughout the year attempts at testing these youth with the method of "impressionistic measurement" or "subjective assessment" was relied upon more heavily than quantative means of measurement. Tests were used more for the purpose of gaining qualitative information about youth's abilities or functions than for obtaining a formal test score. In addition to a refined qualitative evaluation of test performance, past experience and initial interest as expressed by a youth were given emphasis when attempting to reach decisions concerning job or training placement.

In some instances it was necessary to provide clinical psychological evaluations for those youth who appeared severely emotionally disturbed or mentally retarded and who were in need of referral to mental health agencies for treatment.

Youth were referred to the WAY-YECC testing service by the counselors for such purposes as: (a) the assessment of general ability; (b) the detection or ruling out of organic brain damage which might have interferred with a plan of action; (c) a determination of mental retardation; (d) developing insight into the youth's attitudes towards parents and

authority figures; and (e) a determination of the youth's general manner of relating in interpersonal situations.

One of the obstacles to employment for "hard-core" youth is the popular demand for performance on paper and pencil tests. The difficulty these tests pose for these youth was dramatized by efforts to qualify youth on an "Oral-Direction" Civil Service Examination. Minimal reading and/or verbal ability was required on this test. A total of 37 or 69 percent of 54 youth in the first group exposed to the examination failed to make a qualifying score. In practically every instance these were youth screened as suitable for working in laborers jobs. They were also capable of understanding and performing verbal directions in the judgement of the counselors.

It was reasoned by staff that the high failure rate was due to generalized negative reactions to the test situation.

In an effort to overcome some of the incidental barriers to performance on this test, these youth were taken in groups of 12 to 15 and given simple, clear-cut instructions on how to take a test. Analysis of the results following these instructions indicated that 32 or 73 percent of 44 applicants referred the following week passed this test.

The experience served to point up that increased familiarity with simple paper and pencil tests can be of significant value in helping these youth to pass these tests.

Experience in working with these hard-core target area youth, indicated that the availability of a testing service could provide valuable consultation and assessment assistance in those instances where the

counselees presented serious problems which had to be identified and corrected before any significant progress could be made.

The testing service was able, in most instances, to provide immediate assessment and recommendations that helped the counselors arrive at the best possible plan of action for the counselees. As indicated above, the assessment approach experimented with at the Center was one of minimizing the use of simple test scores and maximized qualitative interpretations. The counselor was urged to tailor the assessment to the immediate situation rather than follow a prescribed formal procedure for every youth.

Despite the firm conviction that this resulted in more meaningful assessment of the capabilities of alienated youth, there is a need for rigorous research to test the validity of this approach.

Problems Associated with the Counselors

The characteristics of the population being served and external factors, such as attitudes of the employer and established agencies in the community, often converged to create a feeling of frustration and anxiety in the counselor. This anxiety had many ways of expressing itself among the members of the staff and in all probability was ultimately communicated to the youth.

When the program first opened, the counselors had difficulty with the dependency problem as well as problems involving the focussing primarily on those factors which impeded the youths' progress toward gainful employment.

The dependency problem came as no surprise, the work of McCord[3] and others would lead one to expect a high degree of dependency among this segment of the population.

McCord, for example, reports that boys who were passively dependent, on both adults and peers, were from homes in which there was a passive, ineffectual father. The existence of broken homes and matriarchal family structures has been well documented for this population.

The difficulties arising out of the need to maintain a focus on the reality problems which keep these youth from entering the world-of work were discussed in regular staff meetings.

The effect of this reality approach to counseling on the counselors themselves was documented by observational notes taken during the early phases of this project and at the end of the one-year period. At the beginning of the program each of the counselors from the different disciplines represented, were very confident of the fact that their academic training and experience had well qualified them for this program. The effects of staff interaction and the cross-fertilization which took place became more and more evident as the program progressed. Six months after exposure to the other disciplines in the setting the social worker began to sound like the clinical psychologist, the clinical psychologist began to sound like the vocational counselor, and the vocational counselor began to sound like the social worker.

The case discussed below involved a counselor who at the end of the one-year period was one of the most effective staff members.

The counselee was a 19 year old female, who had dropped out of school in the eleventh grade. She was the oldest of four siblings. Her father had deserted the family two years earlier. The mother was receiving public assistance. The girl had dropped out of school to help support the family. At intake the youth was shabbily dressed and exhibited poor personal grooming. During the initial series of interviews the counselor was able to determine that the girl had fairly good typing skills. He began formulating an action plan that included improvement of her personal appearance. One of the physical drawbacks was the girl's loss of hair; she had huge patches of hair missing, with an obvious dermatitis.

The counselor referred her to several typing jobs but she was turned down, after having passed the typing tests, because of her physical appearance.

The counselor then made a decision to help the young lady acquire one of the currently popular wigs. When he failed in these attempts, the problem was presented at staff where a decision was made to refer the girl to a clinic to have the problem of dermatitis corrected. The counselor was chided by other staff members for his attempt at treating a symptom and literally attempting to "cover up" the real problem. It should be mentioned that the referral resulted in the neural dermatitis problem being resolved and the young lady, in the last follow-up report, had not only been employed but had also entered night school to complete her education.

In general the counselors were able to relate to the youth in a firm positive and direct manner. They were able to establish ~~raport~~ report, to listen

to and to effectively communicate with the youth. They were able to impart their genuine interest in wanting to help the youth, and their support and guidance was immediately responded to by the youth. During the early phases of this project the counselors did, however, need to be constantly reminded of the need to limit their counseling efforts to those factors which were impeding the youths' locomotion toward gainful employment. As of September 1964, after one year of operation, most of the counselors who had gone through this period were capable of supervising their own reality focussed program.

This fact was attested to, in part, when these counselors became involved in the training program for the personnel that were scheduled to work in the Department of Labor's Youth Opportunity Centers. It was suggested that the WAY-YECC counselors become master counselors in the Youth Opportunity Center proposed by the United States Employment Service for the District of Columbia.

The different levels of readiness for counseling urban youth exhibited by the counselors at the beginning of the program pointed up the existence of an hiatus between the formal academic training received and the job requirement in working with hard-core youth. Few practitioners would deny the existence of this hiatus or deny the fact that it is prevalent for the traditional school counselor, the psychologist, the vocational counselor and the social worker.

This gap is, however, painfully magnified when the inappropriately trained middle-class counselor is thrust into a counseling situation with the "unwashed" 16-22 year old segment of the population. The tradegy is

that not only are the life styles of this population foreign to the middle-class counselor but only within the last few years have sincere attempts been made to acquaint the counselor with this segment of the population prior to his fortuitous placement in working with these youth.

Part of the problem, however, lies in the lack of a definition of counselor role and hence a lack of orientation and focus in the academic training and requirement for specific counseling responsibilities.

For example, in many of the school systems in this country the only requirement for becoming a counselor is related to the number of years a person has taught. Others require an additional number of subject matter hours which are often unspecified.

In the preface statement of the publication, The Counselor in a Changing World, by C. Gilbert Wrenn, Wolfle puts the problem in proper perspective as it pertains to the educational counselor. He states: "The current reality is that most persons employed as school counselors are inadequately prepared to meet these rigorous standards. They are largely recruited from among persons who originally prepared themselves for one career--for example teaching history--and who on the basis of meager additional training, became 'counselors.' The hard truth is that many school 'counselors' have not been trained to give a student much help in finding his way in an increasingly complex world."

It is highly probable that many of the most effective counselors in our schools are those with teaching experience but it is also highly probable that the effectiveness of these counselors could be increased if

specific academic training was required which included courses such as "Life Styles of the Poor," "Dynamics of Human Behavior," etc., as well as a supervised practicum experience in those field situations where the counselor is likely to be assigned. This is of particular importance when one considers that the counseling offered in urban schools today is, in the main, for the college-bound youth. The stark reality is that the majority of the youth who enter our public schools each year are not college-bound. The Department of Labor[5] estimates that 74 percent of the 26 million youth entering the labor market this decade will have completed only high school or less. It is herein contended that a vast majority of these youth are in extreme need of a reality-based counseling program.

The gap that exists between the training requirement and the job requirement for school counselors also exists in varying degrees for the social worker, the psychologist, and the vocational counselor.

There are three basic reasons why the traditional social work approach does not have greater payoff in working with this segment of the population. First, there seems to be an occupational malady having to do with "good casework" practice. The social worker is too often preoccupied with complete family rehabilitation. At best this is a long and tedious process and often when completed has provided only minimal payoff. Too often the social worker can only offer these youth and their families intangibles, a sort of "go straight or bad now and pay or be paid later." It has been fairly well documented that these youth have

a tremendous need for tangibles. There is a need for immediate gratification. The long-range goals must be tempered with a satisfaction of the current problems confronting these youth.

The psychologist and vocational counselor are usually overly concerned with the use of standardized measures. They are often unwilling to abandon the use of standardized instruments or to deviate from the prescribed methods of their administration. The psychologist in this type of setting has a great deal of difficulty in not getting too deeply involved in the "psychodynamics" of the case. In addition, and not unlike the social worker, the psychologist also wants to do complete family rehabilitation. It should be pointed out that this is not intended to discredit the family rehabilitation approach, it is just that this approach, like the use of the psychoanalytic approach with persons of low socioeconomic status, has not demonstrated itself as the most efficacious in dealing with the reality problems of the poor.

B. External Problems

External problems for this project ran the gamut from lack of clarity of the role, function and jurisdiction of departments within the federal and local government to increased pressure from the Board of Directors and to some extent OMAT itself, to shift the focus from hard-core youth. In the instance of the Board, the rationale was to achieve "a more balanced design" and in the case of OMAT to increase the "success statistic."

Many of the demonstration projects conducted under contract with the Office of Manpower, Automation, and Training were conceived and implemented on a crash basis. The areas of responsibility for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the Department of Labor had not been clearly spelled out. Further the jurisdictional roles for bureaus within the Department of Labor had not been clarified. This often resulted in the contractee being buffeted between the Bureau of Employment Security, the Bureau of Apprentice Training and the Office of Manpower, Automation, and Training. This was often further confused by what the role of education, and more specifically what the role of vocational education, should be at both the federal and local level.

This lack of clarity at the federal level, which reflected itself in a lack of clarity at the local level, became especially evident when community agencies such as WAY presented the local United States Employment Service or the Vocational Education System with proposals aimed at establishing additional MDTA institutional programs.

Relations with Other Agencies

The problems encountered by the demonstration project in working out their relations with other agencies were similar for most of these projects. A quote from a case history circulated by CMAT on a hypothetical Mayor's Commission for Youth is illustrative of the problem.

> The first problem we ran into was an apparent misunderstanding on the part of the local employment office as to the nature of the special projects. Since they had not received instructions from the Labor Department, setting up guidelines for the special projects until after we had begun to prepare our submission, it was their impression that only

they had the right to initiate projects. It was at this time that it became clear that the directions and advice we were receiving were contrary to the directions and advice they were receiving. This obviously led to a wide variety of misunderstandings, with the employment office feeling that we were presuming on their prerogatives and with the Commission feeling that it was being bypassed. Ultimately this was resolved, but it led to other problems and misunderstandings.

The second problem was that of the skill area. According to the law, there had to be a 'reasonable expectation of employment.' As this was interpreted locally, it was taken to mean a guarantee of employment and quite specifically within the city itself rather than within the labor market area. This, too, was ultimately resolved but only after considerable negotiation, and much confusion, on both the local and state levels. As we understand it, the employment service was requested some time in July to expand its survey to include both large as well as small appliance repair and to survey the entire labor market area. As far as we know, this was not done until, possibly, September. A further complication was that regulations forbade the local employment office to share all but a summary of the results of its survey with us. As a consequence, some question arose as to the adequacy and depth of the survey. As mentioned above, however, these problems were finally resolved--the skill area was cleared and the proper forms filed.

It was at this time, or during this period, that we became aware of and concerned about other complications on the state level that effected our project directly. In a telephone conversation with an official of the State Employment Service in the State Capitol, we were informed that they were not interested in the demonstration aspects of the project. They said they viewed this project, though a 'special,' in much the same way as they viewed the standard MDTA programs. In this case, they said, the employment service would be responsible for selecting, counseling and testing, and placing the trainees and vocational education would be responsible for the training. The Mayor's Commission, we were told, would be involved only as an advisory body and not as the agency responsible for the project.

Clearly this was contrary to our thinking and intention, for aside from training and placing young people from disadvantaged areas in profitable employment, it was precisely the demonstration aspects of the program we were interested in and which we felt were also the interest of the Special Projects Office. Again this took considerable negotiation and the expenditure of a vast amount of time before it was finally resolved and a contract awarded to the Mayor's Commission by the U. S. Department of Labor. However, because of complications at the federal and state levels, the nature of which is unclear, the training portion of the proposal was eliminated from the contract and we were advised that we would have to negotiate this separately with the State Division of Vocational Education.

At the moment we are still trying to negotiate this section of the contract, which is the main reason now why we are not in full operation. The way our proposal was set up, a Ford Foundation sponsored education project, which is part of the city school system, was designated as the unit to be responsible for the training. This was done with the approval of our Superintendent of Schools who is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Mayor's Commission, Without consultation either with us or the city school system, however, the State Division of Vocational Education designated the vocational education unit to do the training, and to set up the program according to their specifications. As a consequence, we ran into other misunderstandings inasmuch as various decisions were made which, legitimately, were the prerogative of the project and the project director.

This, too, appears about to be resolved. About ten days ago, after much negotiation, the State Division of Vocational Education sent a representative to discuss the problem with representatives of the Mayor's Commission and the city school system. We were assured by the state representative that, administratively, it was the responsibility of the local school system to determine how the project should be organized. We then discussed various alternatives and agreed that the structure outlined in the original proposal was the one that was wanted.

Hopefully we can now proceed to the next step which is the preparation of a training plan to implement the program. Now that we have engaged a project director, I believe we will be able to move forward more expeditiously.

Some additional information regarding our negotiations with the Division of Vocational Education may also be pertinent. Last June we were informed by the state that if our local Superintendent of Schools approved of the project, the State Division of Vocational Education would also approve it. A letter from our Superintendent of Schools, approving the project was dispatched. Later, however, when we were in the midst of our negotiations we were told that the situation which prevailed in July no longer prevailed and that there were new rules. Unfortunately we have been unable to find out what the rules are, who makes them, and according to what authorization. This also delayed negotiations and made them difficult.

Another complicating factor is the addition of a co-ordinator of MDTA programs to the city school system. This position did not exist last spring when we initiated our proposal; in fact before our submission there were not, I believe, any MDTA programs in the city. In any event, it was the director of the MDTA programs whom the State Division of Vocational Education designated as responsible for the training portion of the program, rather than the director of Ford Foundation project, as we had designated in the original proposal. By making this decision, without consulting us or discussing the matter, additional complicating factors were added.

This has been the history of our project to date. It seems apparent to us that we have been caught in a power struggle among various agencies which has made it virtually impossible to move as quickly and effectively as we would have wished. It is our hope that most of this is now resolved.

The physical proximity of demonstration projects conducted at the local level in Washington, D. C. to the federal structure has many positives but it also has many negatives. The desire to make Washington

the "prototype" for all projects means that the local project is constantly descended upon by the "consultants" from the federal structure.

The federal "consultant," depending upon his background and training, has varying degrees of expertise and this is often reflected in his evaluation of the local project. One of these "site visits" resulted in an evaluation report of the Youth Employment Counseling Center program which read:

> The intake office was not designed to attract youth. It was drab and unattractive. The entry was a busy secretarial pool and behind this was a maze of small offices.

The same evaluation report continues:

> The use of the counselors time for lengthy intake procedures seems wasteful. Instead, the use of an intake clerk at the initial point could be instituted without sacrificing the rapport that the project considers so important.

It should be pointed out that this particular "consultant" was not only extremely helpful in the writing of the original request for funds, but was one of the most knowledgable persons reviewing demonstration projects from the federal level.

The Matter of the Training Allowance

In several cases the amount of the training allowance offered these youth was too small and realistically unacceptable to the youth who needed the training and the counseling offered by such a program. The youth who frequent the pool hall often are able to make twice as much gambling than that received on the MDTA training allowance. Some of the

youth refused training because they in reality could find low skill employment themselves that payed better. This created something of a problem for the counselor who was attempting to point out to the youth the value of training and long-term career planning.

In addition to the above problem there was the problem of holding a youth in a program through counseling while he was awating a training allowance. It is a given that there are unavoidable breakdowns in administrative procedures. While the errors that do occur are frequently inadvertent, they are or can be costly errors for the youth involved. Such errors play havoc with the reality counseling approach and if they are not corrected, can reverse the positive gains obtained by the counselor.

In the early stages of the project youth were accepted who were in need of help, but who were not as hard-core as others. The youth who fall in this category frequently have considerable difficulty in finding their way into the world-of-work although they are presumably more qualified for jobs than are the youth presenting significantly more problems. The case of W. T. points up some of the incidental problems in working with the youth in this category.

W. T. is an unemployed 21 year old target area mother of three, who was referred to the Youth Employment Counseling Center on October 17,1963, by Family and Child Services.

W. T. presented herself as a very pleasant, but slightly obese person. She graduated from a small town high school in South Carolina. She stated that she was a better-than-average science student. She came to Washington, D.C. because she was "tired of mosquitoes, rice, and no job opportunities."

Her last employment prior to visiting the Center was as a waitress. She was terminated in August 1963 because of the slow season in the District restaurant business.

She indicated an interest in training as a practical nurse. It was her feeling that this training would not only upgrade her skills, but also start her toward realizing her life time ambition of becoming a nurse.

Earlier she had sought employment through the United States Employment Service of the District of Columbia, but had not been successful. She received $17.00 per week unemployment compensation. She was told that if any jobs turned up, she would be notified by that office.

After discussing the training requirements of practical nursing with her, a tentative plan of action was agreed upon which included:

1. Completing the General Aptitude Test Battery
2. Registering for practical nursing (MDTA) training

An appointment was made for W. T. to be registered in the MDTA Practical Nursing Program. The fifty-three week training program for practical nursing which would begin around the end of January 1964 was discussed and W. T.'s name was placed on the waiting list.

The action plan also included her attending counseling sessions at the Youth Employment Counseling Center. Particular attention was to be focused upon dieting, attitudes about work, and the possibilities of obtaining part-time work while waiting for the Practical Nursing Program to begin.

The counselor referred W. T. to a department store in the suburbs of the District for a waitress job. She completed the application with high

expectations of employment. The job, however, did not materialize. She was not placed and it was not possible to find out why she was not placed.

She was then referred to a local hospital by the United States Employment Service of the District of Columbia for interim training in the Nurse's Aide Program at $1.10 per hour. This proved to be another failure experience. The hospital informed her that they had to write the high school in South Carolina for her high school record. W. T. was not given a return appointment, although she was promised she would be notified as soon as the records were obtained.

Counseling was continued with this youth and was aimed at maintaining her interest and motivation and improving her personal appearance. During this time, she was receiving unemployment compensation.

In January 1964, W. T. was accepted in the MDTA program with the expectation that her training allowance would be $35.00 weekly. The youth failed to receive the training allowance as expected and reported this fact to the Youth Employment Counseling Center. The failure to receive an allowance caused the youth extreme financial difficulty.

An emergency request for aid was initiated by the counselor with Family and Child Services. Family and Child Services advanced W. T. $27.00 which took care of some of her emergency needs while efforts were being made to get some action taken on the delay of her checks. It had been determined that the necessary forms could not be located.

A review of some of the details of this problem indicated that on February 10, 1964, an inquiry was made to the Unemployment Compensation Board as to the reason why a youth who had completed the Official Notice

of Selection for Training on January 17, had not received allowances. It was then determined that another form was needed to authorize payment of allowances.

Persons responsible for processing training forms stated that all clerical procedures, except those to be completed by persons administering training, had been completed and that the documents had been mailed. Subsequent inquiries on the same date to the training site revealed that no records had been received for this youth.

The Unemployment Compensation Board on February 11 stated that the form had not been received by the person administering the training facility. Additional discussion revealed that the youth's papers had been sent to the wrong training site. Neither of the training sites nor the MDTA administrators had any knowledge of the records.

The United States Employment Service for the District of Columbia and the Unemployment Compensation Board agreed to reproduce copies of duplicate forms. An examination of the forms indicated that the counter-signature on the rear of the form was dated February 3, eight days after the date the youth was entered into training.

The forms had been completed by the youth and had been processed by the District Unemployment Compensation Board. The forms had, however, been sent to the wrong training facility and were subsequently lost.

Duplicate forms were then processed and hand-carried to the appropriate persons. The youth was without an allowance for a period of approximately one month.

The intervention by the Youth Employment Counseling Center made it possible to expedite an involved clerical-administrative procedure and thereby prevent the youth from dropping out of the Practical Nursing Program because of her economic circumstances. In this instance it was possible for a person familiar with the official routines to clarify a cumbersome problem within a two-day period. It seems highly improbable that the youth involved here would have been able to negotiate this system alone before reaching the breaking point.

As indicated earlier, the placing of truly hard-core youth in gainful employment presents a formidable set of problems even after the youth has been trained. Problems in this area include employer attitudes, the written requirement of the job and related factors such as child labor laws, industry training requirements, apprenticeship requirements, distance to be travelled by the youth from home to place of employment, etc.

Employer Attitudes

Many of the hard-core youth physically present themselves in such a manner that defies the counselor, the prospective employer and the community in general. The chemically processed hair, the pointed-toe or the untied shoes, the leather jacket, the indoor wearing of the hat, the dirty shirt with opened collar, the strident or sloppy gait, the defiant or blank look, the apparent lack of motivation, etc. found in this population tend to work to the youth's disadvantage. Many prospective employers were not willing to employ youth who had dropped out of school even when reality focused counseling had corrected some of the above deterrents to employment.

The employers perceived these youth as being unstable and untrustworthy. They were suspicous of the youths' willingness to work or his seriousness of purpose.

Prospective Employers and Child Labor Law

One of the provisions of the 1929 Child Labor Law of the District of Columbia has to do with work requirements. A portion of this provision reads thusly:

> No minor between the ages of 14 and 18 years shall be employed in any gainful occupation unless the employer has procured and keeps on file, accessible to any person authorized to enforce this act, a work or vocation permit.

In dealing with prospective employers it was found that many of them would rather avoid hiring youth between the ages of 14 and 18 years so as to not be concerned with complying with the law.

Job Requirements

The written requirement for jobs to be filled both in the private and public sector too often have little relevance to the actual tasks to be performed and while high correlations may be found between a particular set of test scores and ability to perform the tasks, many of these jobs would have a lower attrition rate if other techniques were attempted. This holds true, not only for the blue collar and service occupations but the professional and to some extent the managerial positions, as well.

The types of examinations given for semi-skilled jobs for placement within the Federal Government precluded the entry of many of the youth with whom the project was concerned and who could conceivably perform the

tasks at a satisfactory level. In the federal structure many of the requirements tend to exceed private industry practices. For example, to become a warehouseman the requirement is high school education, three months of specialized experience, good English, and a knowledge of office procedures. To become a laundry worker three to six months experience or substitute training is required.

Job development activities included contacts with the individual employers, government agencies, and management associations. In several instances indications were received that the industries were dissatisfied with the level and caliber of training received by youth enrolled in some of the MDTA programs and that the trainees would not be employable after completion of the program.

Difficulties were encountered in this area when attempts were made to open up the communication channels and revitalize the opportunity for dialogue between the persons administering these programs and the vested interest groups of particular industries. The problems that this posed for the counselor evolved around encouraging youth to enter training programs where there was reasonable doubt of placement.

Maintaining the Focus on the Hard-Core, Disadvantaged Youth

Almost to a person, the 1,731 youth who had contact with the Youth Employment Counseling Center came from disadvantaged backgrounds. During the one-year period less than one percent of these youth were white. As indicated earlier, the majority were Negro male between 15 and 18 years of age.

One of the major problems for the Center was maintaining a focus on serving the "hard-core" alienated youth despite the difficulties encountered in opening opportunities for them.

Many of the training and job opportunities developed had requirements which superceded the qualifications of these youth. This necessitated the use of an "inactive file" of less hard-core youth, as well as recruitment through other community agencies for these training and job opportunities. An attempt was made to use the less hard-core youth for these placements as the vehicle for providing subsequent placement opportunities for the more hard-core youth. The danger in such a practice is that the counselor receives immediate positive reinforcement from working with the less hard-core youth where minimal counseling is required and the number of such cases tends to increase at too rapid a rate. Such a practice can work to the detriment of the target population--the more hard-core youth.

This was perceived as an administrative problem and attempts were made to correct it. What could not be corrected internally was the constant pressure from the administrators of the federal program where there was a felt need to produce a seventy percent successful statistic in order to buttress their argument for extending the legislation. The dilemma posed for the administrator of the demonstration projects, however, was one of providing an illusion of service as indicated by placement statistice or adhering to the intent of the legislation and the commitment made in the original request for funds.

IV. CONCLUSION

In spite of the myriad of problems encountered in planning and implementing these crash demonstration projects the intrinsic success of the programs far exceeds that which may be gleaned from a review of the reported statistics.

The experience gained through these programs should not go underutilized by current efforts to establish youth programs. Further, it should be underscored that, for the hard-core youth that the current programs are purportedly aimed, reality counseling is a necessary ingredient to their success.

It should be further emphasized that basic changes are needed in the existing institutional systems if the long-range goals implicit in the legislation aimed at building the "Great Society" are to be achieved.

The major problem which remains is one involving the institutionalization of the means of reaching these youth prior to their need of the type of service offered through these demonstration projects.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Brayfield, Arthur H., "Counseling and Public Employment," The Amer. Psychol., Vol. 19, No. 11, Nov. 1964.

2. Deutsch, Martin, "Facilitating Development in the Preschool Child: Social and Psychological Perspectives," The Merrill-Palmer Qtrly., Vol. 10, No. 3, Jul 1964.

3. McCord, W., McCord, J., and Zola, I., Origins of Crime, Columbia Univ. Press, New York, 1959.

4. Wrenn, C. Gilbert, The Counselor in a Changing World, Amer. Pers. and Guid. Assn., Washington, D.C., 1964.

5. United States Department of Labor, "Manpower Research Bull." No. 2., March 1963.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.